

us; they relate to people with whose general habits and customs we are only partially acquainted; they occupy the foreground of the little knowledge we possess respecting them, and certainly indicate a fearful state of ignorance and moral degradation, as existing where such cruelties are not only practised but applauded.

But while our sympathies are thus actively called forth in behalf of these far-distant idolators, and we readily contribute of our means, and heartily co-operate in measures in order to deliver them from such a cruel thralldom, we forget, in our excitement, that in our own land, and at our own doors, there is a fearful amount of practical heathenism, which is just as distressing in its temporal, and far more appalling in its eternal results, than that of India. There, the people have no Vision; but here, there is Vision, and in open defiance of it "the people perish."

Forgetful of this moral waste that is around us, we feel shocked at the idea of a mother voluntarily drowning her child or casting it to alligators; but we are not shocked at the sight of hundreds of children in our city suffering for years a cruel martyrdom from cold, and want, and cruel usage, because of the wilfully ignorant and morally degraded state of their parents.

We shudder to read of men and women voluntarily throwing themselves before the car of Juggernaut, and perishing in their superstition; but we hear with little emotion of the countless victims in our own neighbourhood, who destroy themselves daily by a grosser and more debasing idolatry—the heathenism of irreligion, with its profligacy, cruelty and intemperance—men and women voluntarily casting themselves down before the idol, and perishing in their sin.

And yet the claims of the one are certainly stronger on us than the claims of the other, for if Scripture enjoins that we attend first to the wants of our household, and denounces him who neglects this duty as a denier of the faith, and worse than an infidel, *surely* our first duty in works of mercy is, *to see* to the moral and spiritual wants of those who are blindly perishing around us, and to endeavour to let in upon them the light of the truth, before we look to the regions beyond—we should not neglect *the duty* which is *near*, while we attend to *that* which is more remote.

It is true, that in our city there is ample church accommodation for the whole population; but it is just as true, that with a vast number of the poorer classes there is a deplorable neglect *of*, or contempt *for*, the public means of grace; and the excuse which many in old country